

"Growing up I never really understood why anyone would smoke. As I have gotten older, I have seen the effects of smoking take their toll on my family. Over the last decade, I saw my grandfather pass away from emphysema after a lifetime of smoking. It was such a slow and miserable way to die. He was a great person and was still so sharp mentally all the way up until his death in September of 2000. I miss him greatly and know he would still be alive today if it weren't for tobacco. This is why I am a big advocate of the smoke-free cause. Every chance I have, I tell kids about the benefits of athletics and relate the story of my grandfather. Athletes, coaches, teachers, and anyone who cares about kids—we have a strong influence over these youth and can help spare them the pain of a life cut short by tobacco. Let's do what we can to support tobacco-free youth."

—Tracy Ducar  
Goalkeeper  
Boston Breakers

Photo by David Silverman

# PRESEASON PREPARATION

## Push Tobacco-Free Policies

Tobacco-free policies will send a loud and clear message that tobacco use is not the norm in your community and will provide kids with a healthy, smoke-free environment in which to play. These policies also educate coaches, referees, and parents about the importance of being tobacco-free role models for kids. When such policies are passed, they often get good media coverage, which gives you the opportunity to reach a broader audience with your tobacco-free messages. Here are some questions to consider:

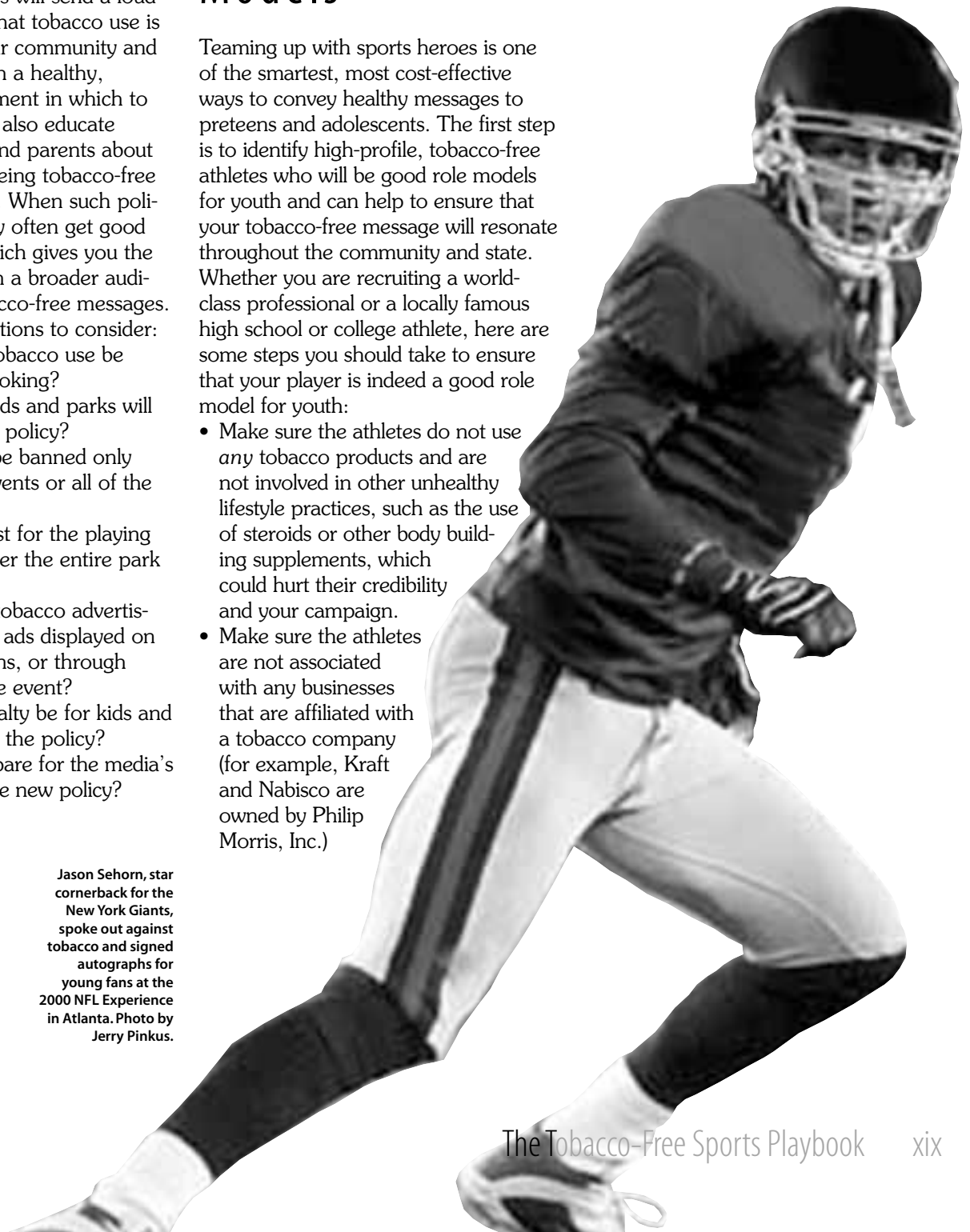
- Will all forms of tobacco use be banned or just smoking?
- Which playing fields and parks will be affected by the policy?
- Will tobacco use be banned only during sporting events or all of the time?
- Will the ban be just for the playing area, or will it cover the entire park and parking lot?
- Will you prohibit tobacco advertising, including any ads displayed on T-shirts, caps, signs, or through sponsorship of the event?
- What will the penalty be for kids and adults who violate the policy?
- How can you prepare for the media's questions about the new policy?

Jason Sehorn, star cornerback for the New York Giants, spoke out against tobacco and signed autographs for young fans at the 2000 NFL Experience in Atlanta. Photo by Jerry Pinkus.

## Find Athletes Who'll Be Winning Role Models

Teaming up with sports heroes is one of the smartest, most cost-effective ways to convey healthy messages to preteens and adolescents. The first step is to identify high-profile, tobacco-free athletes who will be good role models for youth and can help to ensure that your tobacco-free message will resonate throughout the community and state. Whether you are recruiting a world-class professional or a locally famous high school or college athlete, here are some steps you should take to ensure that your player is indeed a good role model for youth:

- Make sure the athletes do not use any tobacco products and are not involved in other unhealthy lifestyle practices, such as the use of steroids or other body building supplements, which could hurt their credibility and your campaign.
- Make sure the athletes are not associated with any businesses that are affiliated with a tobacco company (for example, Kraft and Nabisco are owned by Philip Morris, Inc.)



- Keep up with current sports news and the reputations of athletes you would like to use as spokespersons for your awareness campaign or event. Watch ESPN, and look at various sports sites on the Internet.
- Before approaching a professional athlete or sports organization with ideas or a proposal for a campaign, ask if anyone in your state health department, organization, or school has ever worked with the athlete or team in the past. Find out what their experiences were with the athlete. Positive? Negative? Get the details.

## Make Your Pitch to Athletes and Their Reps

- Contact the athletes' agents or their team's public/community relations department to set up a meeting to talk about ways that you can work together. If you have an event in the works, let the agents know as soon as possible so they have plenty of lead time to consider your request. Don't give them a chance to say that their schedule is already booked.
- When you meet with the athlete or agent, provide background about your state health department, organization, or school and your tobacco-control efforts. Bring samples of newsletters, news clips, photo albums of previous high-profile community events. Discuss in detail what you expect from the relationship.
- Find out whether the athletes truly believe in the message and are not just using your campaign to get good public relations for themselves in the community.
- Make it clear what you want the athletes to do. For example, do you want them to visit a local school and talk with a group of kids for 20 minutes about the importance of leading a healthy, tobacco-free lifestyle? Ask if the athletes would mind signing autographs for kids who take part in the event.
- Outline the messages that you would like to stress, and put them in writing. When they are addressing their fans, the athletes will appreciate having talking points regarding the importance of healthy lifestyles free of tobacco and drugs as well as the harmful effects of tobacco use and its negative effects on athletic performance, strength, and endurance.
- Let the athletes know that as respected and highly visible figures in the community, their presence in your campaign will draw attention to these important public health messages as well as the community education activities and events that you are planning.
- During your conversations or in your correspondence, emphasize the importance of their communicating tobacco-free and other public health messages that could save lives.
- Discuss sponsorship of various activities and approval of outside sponsorship. Make sure that sponsors do not conflict with products that the athletes are already endorsing. Ask the athletes' agents and team community relations departments if they have ideas regarding sponsorship opportunities.

## Keep People In the Loop

- If you are developing a poster or other communication product, make sure that it is approved by the athlete, agent, team, school, and in some cases, the national sports league (e.g., Major League Baseball, National Football League) and possibly an international federation, such as the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) if you are working on an international football/soccer campaign.
- Always express your appreciation by writing follow-up thank you notes. Be sure to include newspaper clippings and photos for the athlete, agent, and team contacts' files. These kind gestures are always appreciated. They'll want to work with you again.

## Organize Team and Stadium Events

The popularity of sporting events in the United States makes them an effective means of grabbing kids' attention and conveying important health messages. These events also present some terrific opportunities for establishing partnerships with supporting organizations that might be willing to help you. Before approaching a professional team with a proposal for an event, you must know what type of event you'd like to use to promote your messages to youth. Consider these ideas:

- Promote your tobacco-free message to youth during opening ceremonies or half-time events. For instance, identify local "Tobacco-Free Stars"—kids who have been actively involved in local tobacco-control efforts through their schools or teams—and honor them at the game.
- Use the ceremonial first pitch at baseball games or a coin toss at other events to promote your messages. For example, link a school contest to the ballpark game so that contest winners get to throw out the first pitch and share their health messages with the crowd.
- Display your tobacco-free messages on the stadium's jumbo video screens or on posters at the stadium.
- Pass out educational flyers to youth and their parents, and hang banners displaying your messages in the stadium. (Check out the free materials available from the CDC Media Campaign Resource Center and Publications Catalog at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco).)
- Have team members sign autographs for kids, all the while conveying positive messages about sports and the benefits of being tobacco-free.
- Set up a booth near the concession stand where the team's physicians and certified athletic trainers can meet with kids and their parents to talk about the addictive effects of tobacco, including bidis, cigars, and spit/chew tobacco. They can also educate youth about the many health benefits of being involved in a sport.
- Find out if your local sports team's radio station allows interviews before the game or during the game's commentary. If so, ask to be on the program to talk about your event and about tobacco-free sports.

## Before Contacting a Team

- Get to know public relations directors, community events coordinators, and certified athletic trainers from your local professional teams.
- Find out if any of your colleagues have ever worked with the team in the past. Ask them about their experiences with the team and with individuals working for the sports organization. If the experiences were negative, find out why.
- Get names of helpful contacts within the sports organization.
- As you must do when working with individual sports spokespersons, you must make sure that athletes on the team do not use *any* tobacco products and are not involved in other unhealthy lifestyle practices, such as steroid use, or any illegal activities. Also make sure that the team and its members are not associated with any businesses that are affiliated with a tobacco company.

## When You Make Contact

- Contact the team's public/community relations department office as soon as possible to set up a meeting so that you have plenty of lead time to organize your event.
- If your state health department or organization has a high-profile honorary chair, be sure to mention that this person will be invited to attend the event.
- Provide sufficient background about your state health department or organization and your tobacco con-

trol efforts. Bring samples of newsletters, news clips, and albums with photos of previous high-profile community events. Discuss in detail what you expect from the event.

- Make it clear that you would like to involve their team's health care professionals such as the physician, certified athletic trainer, and dentist, as well as an athlete to serve as spokespersons for your activities and high-visibility events.
- Clearly identify the roles and responsibilities you have in mind. Because they are well-respected health care professionals, the team's physicians and athletic trainers can take charge of educating youth about the negative, addictive health effects of all types of tobacco (including bidis, cigars, and spit/chew) and about the benefits of a healthy, physically active lifestyle. In addition to discussing the harmful effects of tobacco use, they could stress tobacco's negative effects on athletic performance, strength, and endurance. The athlete's role is to draw attention to the event and to highlight the importance of the tobacco-free messages.
- Sell your activity and emphasize why getting involved in this education campaign will benefit the team. Mention all the media coverage you expect to capture and how the team will benefit from such high-visibility support of a good cause to help children.
- Discuss the activities and materials that you intend to provide. If you are planning giveaways touting your anti-tobacco message, avoid items like plastic disks or baseballs, which can be tossed onto the field and disrupt the game.

## Scout for Sponsors and Media Support

- Find out if any professional teams in your area have a media partner who could provide advance promotional support, especially on radio stations.
- Discuss the sponsors of your event and seek approval of outside sponsorship. Make sure the events' sponsors do not conflict with any of the team's sponsors. Ask the community relations department for ideas about sponsorship opportunities.
- See if any local businesses, such as sporting goods stores, want to sponsor your tobacco control events. Ask the team's community relations department for ideas, too.
- Check with local departments to see what other sporting events—such as road races—are scheduled during the time that you are planning your awareness events. Find out if you can create a partnership to get your messages out through those events.
- Learn the names of sports editors and writers who cover the team and sporting event you are considering to partner with so they can help promote your activity and message.
- Go to the meeting with a plan for the physical setup of your information booths or activity area. Ask if the team would be interested in having an information van on site where you could distribute education materials as part of the event.
- Ask if the team mascot can be designated smoke-free and participate in activities with the team's physicians, certified athletic trainers, and athletes. Find out if the mascot would also appear for media events and

community activities promoting tobacco-free messages.

- Request free tickets to the stadium event for your state health department or organization volunteers and key community members, or distribute the tickets in a drawing at other health department or organization events.

## If You Don't Have a Professional Team

- Find physicians and certified athletic trainers to take part in your state health department or organization activities by going through athletic departments of high school or college athletic programs.
- Check with your local youth soccer league or YMCA sports program for allied health care professionals who might be willing to help emphasize the negative health effects of tobacco use. This individual could also talk with kids about how their athletic performance will be negatively affected.
- Find a hospital with a sports medicine clinic or a physical rehabilitation division, and ask if they know any physicians or certified athletic trainers who might be interested in taking part in your activity or event.

# Evaluate To Stay On Track

Before you start your tobacco-free sports program, be sure to set up a plan to see how your program is operating and what effects it is producing. With this information, you can strengthen your program and increase its effectiveness and impact over time. What you discover through evaluations can help you influence the people who allocate funds and set policies. These findings also show elected officials, policymakers, and others who are interested in your program's success that you are accountable.

To help you conduct good evaluations, the CDC offers technical assistance to state health departments and provides a wealth of information that you can access on the Internet (see [www.cdc.gov/eval](http://www.cdc.gov/eval)). Summarized next are the six steps recommended in the CDC's *Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health*:

- **Step 1. Engage stakeholders.** Stakeholders are the various organizations and people who care about your evaluation findings and who have a stake in how those findings will be used. This can include people involved in program operations (managers, staff, partners, funding agencies, and coalition members); those served or affected by the program (parents, teachers, coaches, athletes, advocacy groups, elected officials); and primary users of the findings who will make decisions about the program (funding agencies, coalition members, and taxpayers). Make these people your partners every step of the way—early on as you are developing the evaluation and throughout the process. Find out what matters to them and what their needs are. Diverse perspectives can then be taken into account when the evaluation is developed and when the findings are analyzed, interpreted, and used. Some programs involve these various organizations and people by forming an evaluation team, which is made up of program staff, external people, and possibly consultants who are experts in evaluation. One person usually serves as the lead evaluator. (See *Finding a Good Evaluator*, page xxviii.)



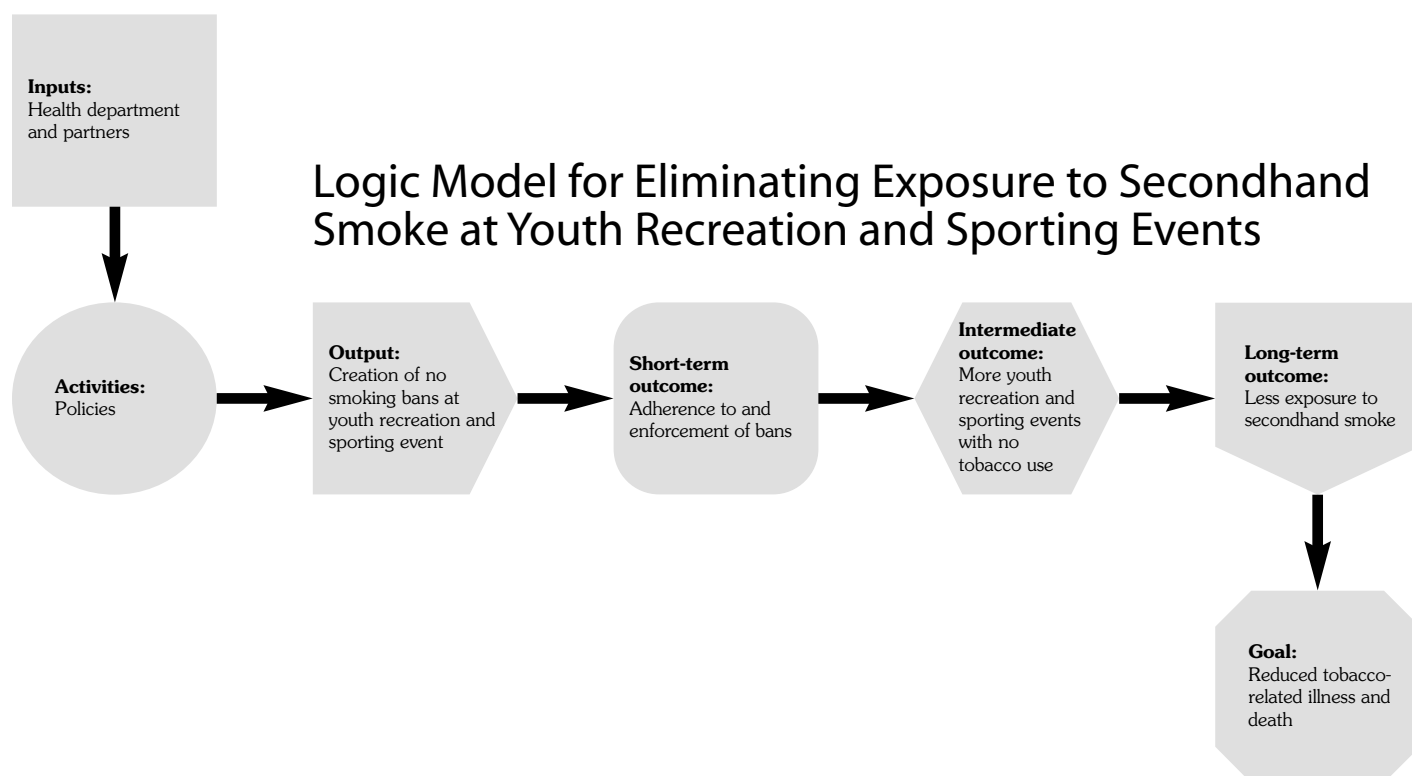
• **Step 2. Describe the program.**

Begin by describing the need for your program: What is the problem you are targeting? How is it affecting your community? How big is this problem overall and in various population segments? Who is your target group? What changes or trends are occurring? Next, indicate the results you expect the program to produce. Be sure to include immediate, intermediate, and long-term benefits as well as your program objectives. (See SMART Objectives, page xxvi.) Also make sure that your local objectives are linked to state and national tobacco-control objectives (the *Healthy People 2010* tobacco-control objectives are available at [www.health.gov/healthypeople](http://www.health.gov/healthypeople)). Describe your program's various activities, indicate how they relate to each other, and link them to your program goals. Indicate the resources needed to conduct the program (money, staff, time, materials, and equipment). Indicate your program's stage of development. Is it

in the planning stages, is it being implemented, or is it a mature program that's producing effects? Describe the environment in which your program operates. Identify any influences—such as social, economical, political, or geographical—that might affect your program. The CDC also recommends that you draft a flow chart (see logic model example below) that shows how your program activities logically lead to the desired outcomes.

• **Step 3. Focus the evaluation design.**

Decide the purpose of your evaluation: What questions will you ask? How will you get the answers? What will you do with the information? How will you share the findings? Decide what type of evaluation you use. *Process evaluations* (conducted throughout a program's duration) assess how the program is operating—What activities are taking place? Who is conducting the activities? Who is reached? Are resources being allocated as planned? What





are the program's strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement? *Outcome evaluations* (conducted once a program is mature enough to produce outcomes) assess what effects the program has produced and whether the program has achieved the desired outcomes:

- Short-term outcomes* describe the immediate effects of your program. They might include children's increased awareness of the dangers of using tobacco or changes in their attitudes about tobacco use.
- Intermediate outcomes* describe changes that occur after your program has had a chance to affect behaviors, norms, or policies. They might include changes in children's behaviors, social norms, or the surrounding environment.
- Long-term outcomes* take years to achieve. They might include reductions in tobacco-related illnesses and deaths.

Different evaluation designs call for different methods—for instance, focus groups, surveys, interviews, or observations of participants. When you are considering which design is best suited for your needs, consider how you can compare your data with state or national data. One option would be to compare multiple sources—for instance, findings from the Youth Tobacco Surveys (YTS) and Youth Risk Behavior

Surveys (YRBS). Such comparisons allow you to set benchmarks for progress.

- **Step 4. Gather credible evidence.** Choose what outcomes you will measure and which indicators you will use to measure these outcomes (participation rates, attitudes, behaviors, community norms, policies, health status). Decide what data sources you will use. Consider whether you will develop your own surveillance system to collect the data you need or whether you can use or modify existing data systems, such as the YTS or YRBS. Factors that will affect the credibility of your evidence include the quality and quantity of data you collect, the collection method you use, and when and how often the data are collected. Also consider these issues: How will the information be collected (through personal interviews, over the phone, by mail)? How will the data be computerized? Who will collect the data? Will these people be trained?

The following questions are especially important: How will you ensure the privacy and confidentiality of participants? Will you need to get approval from an institutional review board (IRB) before collecting the data? What informed consent procedures will you use?

## SMART Objectives

A well-written and clearly defined objective is **SMART**:

<b>Specific:</b>	It identifies a specific event or action that will take place.
<b>Measurable:</b>	It quantifies the amount of change to be achieved.
<b>Achievable and Ambitious:</b>	It is realistic given available resources and plans for implementation, yet challenging enough to accelerate program efforts.
<b>Relevant:</b>	It is logical and relates to the program's goal.
<b>Time-bound:</b>	It specifies a time by which the objective will be achieved.

- **Step 5. Justify conclusions.** The next step is to analyze and interpret the information. If you are using data from another system such as the YTS or YRBS, the data have already been analyzed and checked. If not, your data must be entered, reviewed for errors, tabulated to provide a number or percentage for each indicator, and analyzed by variables of interest (by sex or age, for example). Next, use statistical tests to show differences between comparison and intervention groups, between geographic areas, or within a target population before and after an intervention. Once the data have been analyzed, they need to be placed in an easy-to-read format such as a map, graph, or table. The last step is to interpret the findings. When interpreting the findings, consider the purpose of your program, what the audience wants and needs to know, and whether there are any problems with the data.

- **Step 6. Ensure that evaluation findings are used, and share lessons learned.** Write a report that describes your findings and includes recommendations for action. Keep the report as short as possible, and write it in a way that's easy to understand. Don't use technical jargon. Do use examples, graphics, and stories. Be sure to have your report reviewed and checked for accuracy before releasing it to the public. Share the lessons you have learned with key people at health agencies, sports organiza-

tions, businesses, and schools. Don't forget to inform parents, coaches, community officials, state legislators, health care providers, youth advocacy groups, and the media. You can do this by sending out copies of your report, or you can make presentations. When you share your results, think about the audience and what *they* think is important. You might need several versions of your report for different audiences. You also may want to use the Internet to further your reach.

## Standards for Evaluation

Whether your evaluation is simple or formal, the CDC recommends that you meet these four standards:

- Your evaluation should be useful and answer questions that are directly relevant to the people who'll be using the findings.
- Your evaluation should make sense, take into account the interests of various groups, and be cost-effective.
- Your evaluation should be ethical, and it should be conducted in a way that respects the rights and interests of the people involved.
- Your evaluation should be conducted in a way that ensures the findings are considered correct.

## Finding a Good Evaluator

You can find people within your organization (as long as they're in another department) or hire outside experts to evaluate your tobacco-free sports program. Good evaluators will meet the following criteria:

- They did not help develop or run your program.
- They are impartial and have nothing to gain by skewing the results one way or the other.
- They won't give in to any pressure by senior staff or program staff to produce certain findings.
- They won't gloss over or fail to report certain findings.
- They have experience in the type of evaluation you are conducting.
- They have experience with programs similar to yours.
- They communicate well with you and other staff members.
- They consider the realities of your program—for example, a small budget—when designing the evaluation.
- They deliver reports and protocols on time.

- They relate to the program.
- They explain the benefits and risks of evaluation.
- They explain materials clearly and patiently.
- They respect all levels of personnel.
- They see beyond the evaluation to other program activities.
- They educate program staff about how the evaluation is done, thus allowing future evaluations to be done in-house.

## Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Framework for Program Evaluation in Public Health. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 1999;48(No. RR-11).
- Center for the Advancement of Community Based Public Health. *An Evaluation Framework for Community Health Programs*. Durham, North Carolina: Center for the Advancement of Community Based Public Health, 2000. Available at [www.cdc.gov/eval/evalcbph.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/eval/evalcbph.pdf).